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Objectives of this study were: (1) to review existing library service to the blind and physically handicapped who are unable to use conventional printed materials, concentrating on braille and talking books for non-institutionalized persons, and (2) to suggest approaches to long-term planning for improved services in California, authorized by Title IVB of the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA). It is concluded that the full range and quality of these library services cannot be accomplished at the statewide level by the two existing regional libraries with special materials for the blind, and the need for personal assistance to readers calls for some degree of service at the community level. A statewide network for library service to the blind and visually handicapped is recommended, consisting of a system of regional centers where major collections of frequently used materials in special media would be maintained for use by local library outlets. In addition, the State Library would handle more of the specialized requests and have overall responsibility for the statewide system. Suggestions for first steps toward the long-term development of the network include the strengthening of the Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped program of the California State Library and the promotion of pilot programs at the regional and community levels. (JB)

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LIBRARY SERVICE FOR THE VISUALLY AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

A REPORT TO THE CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

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R. C. SWANK

1967

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Title IV, Part B, entitled "Library Services to the Physically Handicapped," of the Library Services and Construction Act provides for

> . . . payments to States which have submitted and had approved by the Commissioner [of Education] State plans for establishing and improving library services to the physically handicapped. For the purposes of this part the term "library services to the physically handicapped" means the providing of library service, through public or other non-profit libraries, agencies, or organizations, to physically handicapped persons (including the blind and visually handicapped) certified by competent authority as unable to read or to use conventional printed materials as a result of physical limitations.

The California State Library, which will administer such funds as may in due course be appropriated to California under this Title must therefore provide plans and policies for the expansion of library services not only to the legally blind, as in the past, but also to people who, because of other types or degrees of physical handicap, are also unable to use conventional printed materials. The purpose of this study is to review existing library services to the blind and to suggest approaches to long-term planning toward the improved and expanded services authorized by this Title.

A similar study of Title IV, Part A, "State Institutional Library Services," has been made by D. E. Nemetz of the Public Administration Service.[1] Recommendations have been submitted for establishing and improving services (1) to "inmates, patients, or residents of penal institutions, reformatories, residential training schools, orphanages, or general or special institutions or hospitals operated or substantially supported by the State" and (2) to "students in residential schools for the handicapped (including mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, crippled, or other health impaired persons who by reason thereof require special education) operated or substantially supported by the State." Since Mr. Nemetz covered the handicapped who are residents of special education institutions, such as the California School for the Blind, and of state hospitals, I have concentrated on the more general problem of non-institutionalized people who are unable to use conventional printed materials. It is assumed throughout the present report, however, that specialized library programs established at any level--statewide, regional, or local--for the physically handicapped should be available to all such readers, including those who reside in institutions of any kind, public or private.

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[1] Public Administration Service, Library Services in California State Institutions; a Survey Report, July, 1967.

By agreement with the Assistant State Librarian, I have also excluded, for the most part, large print books from this study and have concentrated on braille and talking books. This decision implies no judgment of the relative values of these media; it is clear that large print books will become increasingly important to partially sighted readers. Large print books, however, are capable of being handled by conventional library methods, and the State Library does not plan to service them through its specialized department, Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. My primary concern in this study is with non-print materials.

After reviewing briefly the background and development of library services to the blind and the available statistical data on the physically handicapped who cannot use conventional printed materials, I will describe the present status of library services and will characterize the services by other types of agencies to these readers in California. The principal needs and goals for improved library services will then be identified, and kinds of programs that might be planned to meet those needs and goals will be outlined.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

Francis St. John has reported that libraries for the blind have been in existence since before the turn of the century.[1] The first appears to have been the Boston Public Library, which received a gift of embossed books in 1868. Other libraries--public, state, and private--established services during succeeding decades, and in 1904 Congress passed a law that permitted the free mailing of books to blind people. In 1928, following a survey of library needs of blind people, the American Foundation for the Blind with the support of the American Library Association recommended a federal program, and the Pratt-Smoot Act was passed in 1931.

Under this Act the Librarian of Congress was authorized to arrange with other libraries "to serve as local or regional centers for the circulation of such books, under such conditions and regulations as he may prescribe." Initially 18 libraries in addition to the Library of Congress were selected to provide a regional coverage of the entire United States. Only braille books were circulated to blind readers during the first three years. By 1933 the American Foundation for the Blind had produced a practical phonograph and a durable microgroove, long playing record, which enabled the Library of Congress to begin stocking the regional libraries with talking books as well as with braille. The basic Act was soon amended, then, to include funds for the free distribution of talking book machines. By 1948 the annual appropriation for the program had reached $1 million.

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[1] Francis R. St. John, Survey of Library Service for the Blind, 1956 (New York, American Foundation for the Blind, 1957). See Chapters II and III for the history and organizational patterns of library service for the blind.

In 1952 the Act was amended, by striking out the word "adult," to extend the services of the program to blind children. A general survey of the program was conducted in 1956 by Francis R. St. John,[1] and the succeeding decade became a period of substantial growth and expansion. Beginning in 1963 all new talking books were recorded on 10 inch discs at the speed of 16-2/3 RPM, and studies were undertaken of recordings on discs at 8-1/3 RPM and on magnetic tapes. In fiscal 1966, nearly 4.5 million volumes in raised characters, containers of talking books, and reels of magnetic tape were circulated by LC and the regional libraries to 13,832 braille readers, 88,341 talking book readers, and 6,553 tape readers.[1] The annual appropriation from Congress reached $3,097,000 for fiscal 1967. The number of regional libraries has now grown from the original 18 to 34.

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[1] Ibid.

The present study arises from two new pieces of legislation enacted by Congress in 1966. Public Law 89-522 authorized the Library of Congress to extend its provision of recorded and other reading materials in special media to persons who, because of physical handicaps other than blindness, are unable to read or use ordinary books and magazines. Heretofore the program had been restricted to persons certified as "legally" blind. $1,497,000 was appropriated to enable the Library of Congress to begin this expanded program in fiscal 1967. Public Law 89-511, Library Service and Construction Act Amendments of 1966, added the Title IV, Parts A and B, noted above in the Introduction. Again, Part A is to support state programs for Library services to inmates, patients, or residents of institutions, including schools and hospitals serving the handicapped; and Part B is to support state programs for library services to all persons who are unable to use conventional library materials because of any type of physical impairment. The Library of Congress, on the one hand, will be enabled greatly to enlarge the number of titles and copies of books in special media that it can supply to the states for services to the expanded clientele; and the states, on the other hand, will for the first time receive federal aid for the improvement of present programs and the establishment of new programs that also will embrace the expanded clientele. The Library of Congress has now renamed its Division for the Blind the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and the California State Library has in turn renamed its department Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

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[1] Library of Congress, Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1966 (Washington, D.C., Library of Congress, 1967), p. 157.

The significance of this new legislation is considerable in that it challenges libraries the country over to reexamine their responsibilities and services to handicapped readers in general. Earl C. Graham sees this legislation as the first step toward still broader programs of service to "the culturally deprived, the economically depressed, and the educationally handicapped."

> Libraries and librarians cannot meet this challenge if they continue in their old ways--administering library services within the confines of the four walls of a library to a middle-class, able-bodied, and educated clientele, who may readily enter the library and ask for services. The library must reach out into the community, to meet the people where they are. And it must bring the community into the library. The library must engage itself in the affairs and problems of the community.[1]

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[1] Earl C. Graham, "Public Library Services to the Handicapped," ALA Bulletin (February 1967), 175.

While we confront in this study only the problem of extended service to one particular category of handicapped persons--those who cannot use conventional print--, it is hoped that the patterns of service developed for this category will indeed be useful in future programs for other categories of underprivileged persons.

CHAPTER III

THE VISUALLY AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

This section brings together the definitions of eligibility for library service under Title IV-B of the LSCA, the rules for certification of eligibility; and statistical data on blind and physically handicapped people. My purpose is to describe the populations for whom improved library programs will need to be designed.

Definitions of Eligibility

Under the new legislation a considerable relaxation of the definition of blindness is permitted for the purpose of establishing eligibility for library services. Heretofore only the "legally" blind have been eligible to use reading materials provided by the Library of Congress. The definition of legal blindness has been the same as that most frequently used by the federal and state governments:

> Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye, with correcting glasses; or central visual acuity of more than 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.

In simpler terms a person is said to be legally blind if he cannot recognize at a distance of 20 feet symbols or objects that a person with normal vision can recognize at 200 feet, or if his field of vision is so narrow that he can make very little practical use of his vision.

In contrast to this highly technical and restrictive definition, the language of Title IV-B refers simply to inability "to read or to use conventional printed materials as a result of physical limitations." This redefinition not only relaxes the restrictions on degrees of blindness, as one kind of physical impairment, in regard to eligibility for library service but also extends the eligibility to people with other kinds of physical impairments--indeed, to any kind of physical (but not mental, emotional, social, economic, or educational) impairment that renders people unable to use conventional printed materials. These other kinds of impairments cannot now be comprehensively defined, but they are presently interpreted as follows. A press release (67-3, dated 67-1-10) from the Library of Congress stated that

> Handicaps besides visual impairment which can prevent normal reading are disabling paralysis, muscle or nerve deterioration affecting coordination and control, and confinement in iron lungs or other mechanical devices. Among the causes of the conditions are cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, arthritis, infantile paralysis, myasthenia gravis, and diplegia.

An early draft plan of the California State Library for programs under Title IV-B stated that

> Examples of such persons are those who are blind or so visually limited as to be unable to read; those who have lost their arms or the use of their arms; those who have muscle and nerve control impairment; individuals

> suffering from strokes or cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis or other ailments which make the holding or reading of ordinary books and magazines either impossible or so difficult as to keep them from reading. Such persons may be in homes, in schools, hospitals, or other institutions. This does not include service to those who cannot read because of illiteracy, the lack of education, mental retardation or emotional disturbances, etc., but is restricted to those who are physically handicapped.

The burden of Earl C. Graham's plea, as noted above, is that the broadening of the definition to include these particular categories of *physically* handicapped is not enough--indeed, it is only the beginning--and that library services should be further extended with equal vigor to people who, for mental, emotional, educational, social, economic, or other reasons, are underprivileged with respect to access to, or ability to use, library services.[1] Nevertheless, the present redefinition of eligible users is a long step forward from the former restriction to the "legally" blind.

Certification of Eligibility

A further liberalization under Title IV-B relates to who may certify a person as eligible for the use of reading materials supplied by the Library of Congress. The former policy, as stated by Robert S. Bray, Chief, Division for the Blind, Library of Congress, was that

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[1] Graham, *op. cit*.

> The application should be accompanied by a certificate as to the degree of blindness, signed by a physician, opthalmologist or optometrist. If the applicant is totally blind, a statement to that effect may be submitted by someone well known in the community and will be accepted as certification.[1]

Again, in sharp contrast, the language of Title IV-B calls simply for certification "by competent authority." The Library of Congress press release (67-3, dated 67-1-10) stated that

> To borrow books from his regional library, the individual reader should obtain a brief statement, certifying the characteristics of his physical disability, from a competent authority--such as a doctor, optometrist, registered nurse, professional staff member of a hospital or other institution or agency, or, in the absence of any of these, from a professional librarian. In cases of total blindness, a statement signed by a prominent member of the community is accepted.

The early draft plan of the California State Library stated that

> Competent authorities may include any member of the medical and allied professions, professional persons in the field of public health, education, library service, rehabilitation, social work, public welfare. Efforts will be made to keep the certification for eligibility for the program of specialized library service as simple as possible, avoiding complex forms, questionnaires or case histories wherever possible but all certifications will indicate that the disability is physical in nature and prevents the person reading conventional printed material.

These interpretations, then, of "competent authority" embrace all professional groups that are legitimately involved with services to the physically handicapped, and librarians are now included among these groups. The certification of eligibility for specialized library service becomes a professional judgment of a person's overall, physical disability in the effective use of conventional printed materials instead of a purely technical measure of kind and degree of blindness.

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[1] Robert S. Bray, Library Services for the Blind (Washington, D.C., American Association of Workers for the Blind, Inc. [1965]), p. 93.

Statistics on Blindness

There are no fully reliable data on the numbers of people with visual or other physical handicaps either in the United States as a whole or in California. Bureau of Census data appear to be good with respect to the totally blind, but poor with respect to the partially, or "legally," blind, because of the unwillingness of many people to place themselves in a category that might adversely affect their chances for gainful employment, or simply because they do not emotionally accept their condition. Accurate data, moreover, must be based upon objective definitions and measures of blindness, or other physical handicaps. The nature and scope of the national surveys have precluded the procurement of such data on a large scale.[1] The existing useful data on blindness are estimates projected on the basis of such factors as age, race, and infant death rates in the general population distributions--factors which are known to have a bearing upon the incidence of blindness.[1]

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[1] National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc., Estimated Statistics on Blindness and Visual Problems (New York, The Society, 1966), p. 19.

The Coordinating Council on State Programs for the Blind, in California, has sought to initiate a "systematic registration of blindness" in such a manner as to "make possible significant study of its causes and distribution and, along with it, the kind of program planning which could be calculated closely to meet the needs of blinded individuals. ". . . During the past year, considerable thought was given to the means of establishing a registry of blind persons and the sorts of information that such a registry should contain." But the project had to be dropped "because of the termination of the Department of Health's Prevention of Blindness program. . . ."[2] We are left only with the general projections of national and state estimates and occasional local, community surveys.

The best present estimates of the incidence of blindness and visual problems have been published by the National

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[1] For a discussion of age, race, education, and other social characteristics that bear upon the incidence of blindness, see California Department of Social Welfare, California's Social Welfare Programs for the Blind; an Analysis, March 1965 (Sacramento, 1965), pp. 17-19.

[2] Coordinating Council on State Programs for the Blind, [Report for the year 1965 to the Honorable Hugh M. Burns, President Pro Tem of the Senate, and the Honorable Jesse M. Unruh, Speaker of the Assembly] (Sacramento, January 1966).

Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc.[1] The number of _legally_ blind people in the United States in 1965 was estimated at 416,400 and in California at 34,350. The prevalence rate for California was estimated at 1.84 per 100,000 population as compared with the highest rate of 3.98 in Hawaii and the lowest rate of 1.37 in Utah.[2] In the United States as a whole, in 1962, the legally blind by age groups was estimated at 9.8 per cent under 20 years of age, 13.5 per cent ages 20 to 39, 29.5 per cent ages 40-64, and 47.2 per cent ages 65 and over. Within the last group, 38.3 per cent were estimated at ages 70 and over. Close to half of all the legally blind are therefore of retirement age or beyond.[3]

The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc. also comments on a national survey by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.[4] In this instance, blindness was "defined as the inability to read ordinary newsprint even with aid of glasses," which was taken to mean a visual acuity ranging from 20/50 downward and which I interpret to include many visually handicapped people who might qualify for library service under Title IV-B but who are not legally blind. This survey arrived at an estimated prevalence of "blindness" at 988,000 persons in the United States or 5.6 per 100,000 population for the period July 1959 to June 1961--more than 2.5 times higher than that estimated for legal blindness.[1] It is clear that a great deal more work will need to be done before the numbers of blind people who might qualify for library service under Title IV-B can be accurately assessed.

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[1] _Ibid_.

[2] _Ibid_., p. 19ff.

[3] _Ibid_., p. 33.

[4] U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, _Impairments by Type, Sex and Age, United States, July 1957-June 1958. Health Statistics from the U.S. National Health Survey_ (Public Health Service, Publication No. 584-139).

Statistics on Other Physical Handicaps

Statistics about people who might qualify for library service under Title IV-B because of physical handicaps other than visual are non-existent, simply because they have never been gathered on the basis of inability to use conventional printed materials.[2] Earl C. Graham reported that Quincy Mumford, Librarian of Congress, testified at Congressional hearings that there are approximately two million persons so handicapped: 600,000 partially sighted, 4,700 persons who have lost both arms or the use of them,

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[1] National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc., *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

[2] Note , for example, U.S. Public Health Service, *Chronic Conditions and Activity Limitation, United States, July 1961-June 1963* (National Center for Health Statistics, Series 10, No. 17, Washington, D.C., May 1965) which analyzes degrees of activity limitation among people with various physical conditions, but throws no light on which people with what conditions cannot use conventional printed materials.

8,000 without fingers or toes, 1,600 who are in iron lungs or other respiratory devices, and perhaps 750,000 persons with neurological conditions--such as cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, and Parkinson's disease--, in addition to the 400,000 legally blind, who cannot handle or read ordinary books, magazines, or newspapers.[1] These data cover people who might possibly be eligible for library service under Title IV-B, and they are probably the best that are available now.

Assuming 2,000,000 eligible people in the United States out of a total population of 194,583,000 (1965), and assuming the prevalence rate in California to be average for the country, the number of eligible people out of 18,653,000 in California would be 191,603, which is 5.6 times the 34,000 legally blind to which services have been offered in the past. This projection probably represents the outer limits of eligibility under the new legislation. There is no certain way of knowing.

Additional, and perhaps more reliable, information on the incidence of relevant physical handicaps in particular localities might in some instances be obtained from community surveys conducted by one or another of the social, health, educational, or welfare agencies of the community, such as local branches of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the United Cerebral Palsy Association, the National Society for Crippled Children and Adults, and the Paralyzed Veterans of America.[1] The list of health associations in California embraces many that serve people with handicaps relevant to the new library legislation. In developing proposals for service to the blind and physically handicapped in any community, librarians should establish contact with all such agencies and obtain from them such local information as might have already been gathered about who and where the handicapped are, how many of them there are, and what the varieties of their disabilities are.

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[1] Graham, op. cit., pp. 170-71.

Incidence of Library Use

Not all of the blind and physically handicapped that are eligible for library service under Title IV-B will take advantage of the opportunity to become library users. Only about one out of four of the legally blind have become registered borrowers of library materials heretofore. There is no way of knowing what numbers of eligible, physically handicapped people, other than the blind, would become library readers if the opportunity were offered to them; but the educated guess at present is that about the same proportion, one out of four, would still obtain.[2] If so, the likely clientele of Title IV-B programs in California would be some 47,603 people out of the 191,603 that are eligible. The present number of legally blind that use the library services in California is about 10,000. However, as will be noted later, the present services are distant, passive, and lacking in personal assistance at the community level. If aggressive, local library programs were initiated that reach out to and challenge the handicapped, personally, stimulate their interests, and engage them in new educational, cultural, and vocational pursuits, the proportion of readers might, and should, rise.

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[1] Visits to and telephone inquiries of approximately 15 such agencies in the Bay Area, however, produced no additional, useful information.

[2] Graham, op. cit., p. 171.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENT SERVICES

There are two regional libraries for the blind in California which are supplied with special reading materials by the Library of Congress--the Braille Institute of America, Inc. at Los Angeles and the California State Library at Sacramento. The Braille Institute has in general served that part of the state which lies below the northern boundaries of San Luis Obispo and Kern counties; and the State Library, while it bears a statewide responsibility, has concentrated on that part of the state which lies north of that boundary. In this chapter I will describe the services of these two libraries, then characterize services to the blind and physically handicapped by other types of libraries and by non-library agencies.

The Braille Institute

The Braille Institute of America, Inc., was founded in 1919 on a nonprofit, nationwide, nonsectarian basis to promote the literary culture of the physically blind. It was chartered in 1929, under the laws of California, with the broadened objective of furthering the social and economic welfare of the nation's blind without respect to race, color, or creed. Its services have included the publication and distribution of books in braille, the manufacture and sale of braille typewriters, social welfare activities, recreation and education, business guidance, and home teaching of the blind, in addition to the library services. The library was organized in 1933 and was designated a regional depository by the Library of Congress in 1934.

The book stock in 1967 included approximately 21,000 volumes of braille, 34,000 talking book containers, and 7,500 tapes, totalling 62,500 items.[1] About 358,700 items are now being circulated to readers per year: 53,000 volumes of braille, 278,000 talking book containers, and 27,700 tapes.

The number of registered readers in 1967 was 5,647 (about 5,000 active) in California and 847 (about 600 active) in Arizona, which is also a part of the region served by the Institute. The major part of the clientele is said, not surprisingly, to be people over 65 who were once sighted readers. The demand for services by juveniles is said to be still very low.

Services are rendered by mail, although about 100 "walk-in" readers per week from the immediate community, mostly people who attend classes at the Institute, are given personal attention. Most requests are received by letter, although telephone requests average about 150 per day. With about 7,000 requests to handle per week, little personal guidance can be given. Unless the reader obtains advice on book selection by means of telephone conversations with the staff of the Institute, he must enlist the aid of a sighted third party to choose titles from Talking Book Topics, Braille Book Review, and other aids distributed to readers, and to read and writer letters. Personal visits to readers are beyond the capabilities of the present staff. The staff does take the initiative, however, in supplying readers with a continuing flow of books of kinds known to be of interest to them.

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[1] Moon books are no longer stocked. These may now be obtained from the Library of Congress.

Contact with readers, particularly in the Los Angeles area, is established through the teaching and other activities of the Institute and through schools, state agencies, and private organizations. The library staff itself has no effective means of seeking out new readers who might benefit from the program.

The present library staff consists of 16 people, including a talking book machine repairman. The staff operates under the pressures of a heavy work load, with the result that the unit costs of service by the Institute appear to be low.

A distinctive feature of the Institute's program is the establishment of deposit, or branch, collections in several places, such as the Covina Public Library, the South Whittier Branch of the Los Angeles County Public Library, and the Palo Verde Valley District Library at Blythe. These deposits consist of 50 to 75 titles of braille and talking books and are changed every six months. By this means the possibility of more direct, personalized service is extended to readers at the community level.

Since the Braille Institute has always existed for aid specifically to blind people, it plans not to extend its library service to other categories of physically handicapped people who are unable to use conventional printed materials, as defined by Title IV-B of the Library Services and Construction Act. The non-blind, physically handicapped readers in southern California will be served by the California State Library.

California State Library

The Books for the Blind section of the California State Library was established in 1904 by Miss Mabel Gillis, who later became the State Librarian and who continued her special interest in, and support of, the service throughout her long administration of the State Library. The section has continued to be a valued part of the State Library's program.

The book stock as of July 1, 1967 included 50,582 items: 22,153 volumes of braille, 28,284 talking book containers, and 145 tapes. No Moon books or large print books are stocked. The number of books circulated to readers in 1966-67 was:

	Adult	Juvenile	Total
Braille books	15,806	3,838	19,644
Talking books	194,161	6,772	200,933
Magnetic tapes	2,643	0	2,643
	212,610	10,610	223,220

The number of active readers in 1966-67 was.

	Adult	Juvenile	Total
Braille books	482	106	588
Talking books	3,725	158	3,883
Magnetic tape	222	0	222
	4,429	264	4,693

The number of readers has nearly doubled and the number of books circulated has nearly tripled since 1954-55. An average of 47 books per reader was circulated in 1966-67.

These readers include a small number of people in Nevada. There are also about 200 in southern California who borrow from the State Library instead of the Braille Institute. As the program expands with the inclusion of non-blind, physically handicapped readers, whom the Braille Institute does not plan to serve, the numbers of readers in southern California served by the State Library will increase sharply.

The nature of the services offered by the State Library is similar to that offered by the Braille Institute, except that the State Library, having no associated teaching and other programs for the blind, has no walk-in clientele. Service is entirely by mail, with most requests received by letter and the rest by telephone. Personal contacts with readers are impossible except by telephone. To assist readers (with further help, of course, from sighted third parties) the State Library publishes the quarterly _News Notes for the Blind_, which reports new information about the library services and lists new acquisitions of adult and juvenile books and magazines. This is distributed to readers in addition to _Talking Book Topics_ and _Braille Book Review_. Like the Braille Institute, the State Library supplies readers with continuing selections of books in their known fields of interest.

New readers learn about the service from county, state, and private agencies; only a very few contact the library directly. The library assumes minimal responsibility for reaching new readers, and it has no public relations program in view of the publicity given to it by other agencies that serve the blind and physically handicapped.

The staff of Books for the Blind at the State Library consisted of 16.5 people in 1966-67: 2 librarians, 1 senior clerk, 6.5 intermediate clerks and typists, and 7 stock clerks. The salary budget was $107,076 in 1966-67; and total expenditures, including space, supplies and equipment, and books purchased from gift funds, approximated $140,939. The total cost per reader was just under $30 per year. All funds, except gifts, are provided by the State.

The State Library began handling magnetic tape only recently and has only begun to develop its services in this medium. A bill sponsored by the Coordinating Council for the Blind to provide a staff member to duplicate and circulate tapes, and to provide duplicating equipment and a stock of blank tapes, has recently been vetoed by the Governor.

Machine Distribution

The Library of Congress supplies not only reading materials for the blind but also talking book machines for free use by blind readers. The machines so far distributed are for the playing of disc recordings at speeds of 33-1/3 and 16-2/3 RPM, and these machines are now in the process of being converted to three speeds by substituting motors that will also play recordings at 8-1/3 RPM. It is expected that the Library of Congress will begin wide distribution of 8-1/3 RPM recordings in the next year or so. The magnetic tapes that have so far been supplied by the Library of Congress must be played on privately owned machines at 3-3/4 inches per second. It is expected that in due course the Library of Congress will also distribute for free use tape machines especially designed for the playing of cartridge-type tapes by blind readers. Research is being conducted toward the design of both disc and tape machines for use by people with such handicaps as paralysis and the loss of fingers, arms, and legs.

The talking book machines are now distributed in California by the Braille Institute in the South and the Orientation Center for the Blind, at Albany, in the North. Through 1960 the machines for both North and South were distributed by the State Library. In 1961, when the Braille Institute assumed this responsibility for southern California, the Lighthouse for the Blind, in San Francisco, took over the job for northern California. When the Lighthouse gave it up in 1965, the Orientation Center in Albany took it over for the North.

Throughout the state both the Braille Institute and the Orientation Center are dependent upon a volunteer organization, the Telephone Pioneers, for many practical and technical services that are necessary to the program. These are telephone company employees, many of them retired, who in their own communities maintain personal contact with blind readers, deliver machines and instruct readers in their use, and pick up and repair broken machines. The impressive job of converting many thousands of machines in the field from two to three speeds is being done largely by the Telephone Pioneers. While the extent of their services varies from locality to locality, depending upon the interests of the volunteers who live there, their contributions are splendid. They are often the only local, personal contacts that blind people have with the library program.

The Braille Institute has some 4,100 talking book machines on assignment to readers in Southern California, and it has a large stockpile of machines awaiting assignment. The Orientation Center for the Blind at Albany has some 4,500 machines on assignment to readers in Northern California, and its present stockpile is about 300 machines. The Orientation Institute, which has other, primary responsibilities toward the blind and has neither space nor funds for machine distribution, is performing the service on a strictly emergency basis. The opinion was expressed to me that, if and when possible, the machine distribution should again be handled by the same agency as the book distribution.

The Orientation Center for the Blind, like the Braille Institute, is chartered for service only to the blind and cannot extend the machine distribution program to other categories of physically handicapped people. Non-blind, physically handicapped readers in California, both north and south, are therefore unable at present to obtain talking book machines within the state; they can only apply directly to the Library of Congress for them.

The State Library, in recognition of the desirability of having the machines distributed by the same agency that distributes the books and of the need of distributing machines to non-blind readers covered by Title IV-B of the Library Services and Construction Act, is now seeking an additional appropriation from the state, beginning in 1968-69, to enable it, among other things, to take back the job of machine distribution. The new funds would cover rental of new space and of staff for liaison with outside agencies, record keeping, machine repair, and other necessary functions related to machine distribution, as well as general support for the expansion of book services to the non-blind, physically handicapped covered by Title IV-B.

Public Libraries

Preliminary inquiries about public library programs at the community level to the blind and physically handicapped revealed so little interest or activity as to render any systematic survey of present services pointless. Not even one substantial program at the community level has been reported in the entire state.

There are a number of public libraries, however, that have made some sort of beginning; the following have come to my attention. In a very few public libraries, some member of the staff is known to offer his personal assistance to a blind reader in selecting and obtaining books from the State Library. Examples are the Pittsburgh Branch of the Contra Costa County Library, the Ukiah Public Library, and the Mill Valley Public Library. The Fresno County Free Library has a "fairly extensive collection of Braille books for children," including books transcribed by a women's service club in Fresno; but the library has "not really attempted any special form of service to other physically handicapped persons because of insufficient staff. . . ."[1] The Redwood City Library has a braille collection; and the Eureka City Library and the Arcata City Library have recently been presented braille books on dental health. As noted above, public libraries at Covina, South Whittier, and Blythe are depositories for small rotating collections of braille and talking books from the Braille Institute. There are probably many other community libraries that offer some kind or degree of service to the blind and physically handicapped but apparently none incorporates a major service into its regular program.

The two largest metropolitan libraries in the State, Los Angeles and San Francisco, exemplify what appears to be the posture that public libraries in general have taken in California toward the blind. This posture, as expressed to me by officers of both libraries, is that this category of service has long been left to the two regional libraries for the blind, which have been assumed to be doing an adequate job, and that there has been no evident need for community libraries to enter this field.

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[1] Letter from Mrs. Alice F. Reilly, Fresno County Librarian, July 19, 1967.

The Los Angeles Public Library, however, has undertaken a new experimental program for disadvantaged residents, including shut-ins, supported by funds from the Library Services and Construction Act. The program for shut-ins, which bears closely upon the kinds of services needed by the blind and physically handicapped as defined by Title IV-B, provides residents who are unable to use the library because of physical disability, extended illness, or advanced age with deliveries of up to ten books at one time. The present program is very small and experimental, but it does represent a significant extension of the categories of people to whom library services might be regularly tendered.[1] The larger program at Los Angeles, of which the service to shut-ins is a small part, is attempting to reach the economically and culturally deprived peoples of the city.

Public Schools and the Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped

California has special programs for blind and partially seeing students in 68 school districts and 8 counties. Most of the 203 teachers are serving on a resource or itinerant basis.[2] A directory of California Public School

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[1] Los Angeles Public Library, "Report of Library Services and Construction Act Project #2843" (January 1-June 30, 1966). Also (July 1-December 31, 1966).

[2] Coordinating Council on State Programs for the Blind, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

Programs for Visually Handicapped Children and Youth is published in two sections, northern California and southern California, by the California State Department of Education. The annual registration, January 1965, of blind and partially seeing minors enrolled in these programs, grades K to 14, showed 1,607 legally blind students, of whom 778 use large print as a medium for reading and 92 use both braille and large print. An additional 805 partially sighted students brought the total to 1,675 students using special media.[1]

Whether or not a school has a special education program for visually handicapped students, many school libraries are attentive to their needs, provide suitable materials, arrange for better lighting, and obtain mechanical aids for the use of the materials. Where special programs are administered, separate classes, resource rooms, or itinerant teachers using special materials and equipment may also be available. The special teachers and the librarians work together on matters of seating, improved lighting, selection of student helpers who serve the students by reading, taping, or typing for them, and coordination of community volunteers who serve as transcribers.[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

[2] American Association of School Librarians, The School Librarian and the Partially Seeing Child; Prepared by Instructional Materials Committee, American Association of School Librarians and Miss Helen Gibbons, M.A., Consultant in Education, National Society for the Prevention of Blindness (n.d.).

Neither the California State Library nor the Braille Institute is a major source of special materials for school children. It was noted above that juvenile response to the programs offered in cooperation with the Library of Congress has been disappointing. As far as the schools are concerned, one reason is that the need for textbooks, both basic and supplementary, in special media is not met by the Library of Congress regional deposits, which are primarily for recreational and general cultural reading on short-term loan. The particular needs of the schools are being met by the Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped (CDVH), which is an agency of the California Bureau for Physically Exceptional Children, State Department of Education.

The California Education Code, Sections 6801-6802, defines a physically handicapped minor as any person under the age of 21 years who, by reason of a physical impairment, cannot fully benefit from ordinary educational facilities. Blind and partially seeing children are included. Sections 18102 and 18103 provide for reimbursement to the schools for reader service, the purchase of braille books, the cost of transcribing inkprint materials into braille, the cost of sound recordings, and special supplies and equipment at the maximum rate of $910 for each unit of average daily attendance. The CDVH was established in 1964 under sections 10301-10303 of the Education Code, which authorized the

Superintendent of Public Instructions to "establish and maintain a central clearinghouse-depository for specialized textbooks, reference books, recordings, study materials, tangible apparatus, equipment and other similar items for the use of visually handicapped minors enrolled in the public schools of California . . . " and which provided that special materials "purchased for blind pupils for which state or federal funds were allowed are property of the State and shall be available for use by blind pupils throughout the State. . . ." Such materials are therefore subject to distribution, recall, and redistribution by the CDVH.

The CDVH offers assistance to schools in the procurement of textbooks in special media. The Education Code, Sections 9308 and 9354, requires that all textbooks adopted for pupils in elementary schools be provided in both large print and braille. But since there is no legal authorization "for the Department of Education to provide supplementary textbooks at the elementary level or adopted textbooks at the high school and junior college levels, schools are looking to the clearinghouse-depository for supplementary and secondary materials for the visually handicapped."[1] The CDVH meets this need through five services: (1) a clearing house for textbooks in special media, (2) a circulating library of special books and instructional aids, (3) inventories of special instructional aids housed in school libraries and the exchange of such items among schools, (4) coordination of the production of books in braille, large print, and recorded media, and (5) a register of volunteer and professional organizations which produce books in special media.[1]

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[1] Fred L. Sinclair, "Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped," California Education, III (April 1966), 12.

The clearinghouse operates through a central union catalog of special textbooks and other instructional aids, including the sources from which they can be obtained. Schools requesting items are referred to the appropriate sources. The records show a service in this capacity to schools in 38 counties.[2] The central catalog lists braille, recorded, and large print materials by title. Not only locations are shown but also the agency or program that produced the materials and the person or agency for whom they were produced. The catalog has been developed from four sources: (1) the adopted textbook series, both basic and supplementary, which are provided in special media by the Bureau of Textbook Distribution, (2) the Federal Quota for Braille books from the American Printing House for the Blind, under Public Law 84-922, (3) a large number of voluntary organizations throughout the nation that produce materials in special media and supply lists to CDVH, and (4) schools that voluntarily submit inventories of materials on hand but not in use--in anticipation of exchanges with other schools. A separate file of hand transcribed materials is now being interfiled with other materials in the central catalog. This catalog, which is very extensive, is supplemented by a collection of published lists, enabling the CDVH to conduct nationwide searches for items in any medium requested by the schools.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Coordinating Council on State Programs for the Blind, op. cit., p. 4.

The circulating library is a central depository for textbooks in special media that have been returned from schools and are available for loan to other schools. As noted above, the CDVH, through its inventories of library collections reported by schools, also arranges the redistribution of materials as needed among schools. Similar services are performed with other types of special instructional aids.

Upon request the CDVH arranges for the transcription and production of textbooks in special media by placing books that are not already available with volunteer transcribers and professional agencies for production. Toward this end, a register of such agencies throughout the state is maintained and published under the title, *A List of*

California Transcribers.[1] Information is also supplied on techniques and standards of transcribing and recording for the use of volunteer agencies.

CDVH is a notable service that in range and intensity outreaches those of the California State Library and the Braille Institute, although restricted to a highly specialized clientele. It suggests a number of functions that might be usefully extended by public libraries to other categories of blind and physically handicapped readers. A major problem of the CDVH is that by law it can serve minors in public schools only, thus excluding minors in private schools and adults in public schools, as well as all college and university students. Its central union catalog, which is certainly the most significant and useful bibliographical source in California for materials in special media, and its clearinghouse service are unfortunately not legally accessible to many California residents, both young and old, who could benefit from them.

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[1] California State Department of Education, Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped, A List of California Transcribers; a Directory of Volunteer Transcriber Groups engaged in the Transcription of Books for the Visually Handicapped (Sacramento, Calif., 1966).

Other State Agencies

Two state agencies, the California State Library and the Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped, have already been described. A brief review of other agencies that serve the blind and physically handicapped will be useful, since all are concerned in one way or another with the same people to whom improved library services are proposed by Title IV-B of thr LSCA. In many instances, library services can be advanced through cooperation with them or performed under their programs.[1]

State Department of Education

The State Department of Education has general responsibility for the instruction of exceptional children, including all--about 10 per cent of all children--who require special treatment because of physical handicaps, mental retardation, and so on. The Division of Special Schools and Services embraces the Bureau for Physically Exceptional Children, the Bureau for the Educationally Handicapped and Mentally Exceptional Children, a program of development Centers for

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[1] For detailed information about California state agencies, see Coordinating Council on State Programs for the Blind, State Services for the Blind in California; Revised January 1964 (new revision now in preparation), and Coordinating Council on Programs for Handicapped Children, Programs and Services for Handicapped Children in California, 1967. The following sections are largely excerpted from these sources.

Handicapped Minors, and five state special schools.

The Bureau for Physically Exceptional Children, in addition to operating the Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped, provides advisory, coordinative and supervisory services to school districts and county superintendents of schools maintaining special education programs for physically handicapped children. Consultants to schools, professional organizations, and lay groups are provided with specializations in different types of handicaps, among them visual and orthopedic, including cerebral palsy. One consultant for each of the classification areas is assigned to the southern California unit in Los Angeles.

Among the five state special schools is the California School for the Blind at Berkeley and two for the cerebral palsied at San Francisco and Los Angeles. These schools are described in a study parallel to this one on library programs in state institutions under Title IV-A of the Library Services and Construction Act.[1] In general, local school districts and/or county superintendents of schools are responsible for the administration of special education programs, services, and facilities for handicapped children. In 1965-66 some 171,227 physically handicapped pupils were enrolled in such programs.

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[1] Public Administration Service, op. cit.

State Department of Rehabilitation

The State Department of Rehabilitation aims to provide any service necessary to restore a disabled adult to remunerative employment. Its Division of Vocational Rehabilitation operates regional offices in Sacramento, Oakland, and Los Angeles, which supervise 19 district field offices and 24 branch offices in major population centers of the state and various institutions, such as community health centers. The field services undertake to help adults adjust to physical disabilities and prepare for employment through counseling and instruction.[1]

The Division of Rehabilitation of the Blind operates the following programs: (1) Counselor-Teachers for the adult blind in each of the 24 branch offices of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to help provide adjustment services in the home and in institutions to newly blinded persons; (2) the California Orientation Center for the Blind at Albany (mentioned above in connection with distribution of talking book machines) which provides intensive residential instruction to newly blinded adults; (3) The Business Enterprise Program which provides self-employment for the blind by training and licensing them to operate vending stands and food services; (4) the California Industries for the Blind, which consists of three manufacturing plants (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and San Diego) that produce government contract and commercial items and offer work adjustment, training, and experience; (5) Opportunity Work Centers, which are three sub-contract rehabilitation workshops (Berkeley, San Jose, Los Angeles) that provide sheltered employment in less demanding jobs, such as assembly and prepackaging; (6) Treatment of Blindness, including medical eye care and counseling for adults undergoing progressive loss of vision.

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[1] See California Department of Rehabilitation, Rehabilitation of the Severely Disabled (June 1964) and its Rehabilitation Service for Severely Disabled OASDI Recipients (1965).

The Department of Rehabilitation serves approximately 17,000 adults at any one time through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and about 3,100 visually handicapped persons through the Division of Rehabilitation of the Blind.

State Department of Social Welfare

The Department of Social Welfare has overall responsibility for social welfare programs administered by county welfare departments. Each of the 58 counties in California has a public welfare agency to administer child welfare services, public assistance programs, and medical care programs. Three programs are concerned specifically with the blind.[1] Aid to the Blind provides, through federal, state, and county funds, basic financial assistance to persons who, because of loss or impairment of sight, cannot provide themselves with the necessities of life. The goal is to relieve the distress of poverty. The minimum age for eligibility is 16 years. Aid to Potentially Self-Supporting Blind Residents offers financial assistance from county and state funds to persons who are unable fully to provide themselves with the necessities of life, but who are working on a plan of self-support. The goal is to encourage persons who are potentially capable of economic independence, through regular employment, self-employment in one's own trade or business, practice of a profession, attendance at college, professional, or trade school, or the like. The Prevention of Blindness program offers to applicants for, or recipients of, aid from the above two programs medical treatments or operations designed to prevent blindness or restore vision.

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[1] See California Department of Social Welfare, op. cit., for a detailed analysis of these three programs.

A variety of other programs that benefit the physically handicapped are also administered by the Department of Social Welfare. Among them are the Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the Medically Needy Family, and the Aid to the Disabled programs. Services include medical, dental, home and day care, adoption, and counseling, as well as financial.

Department of Public Health

Among many other concerns, such as air pollution, food and drug inspection, radiological health, water sanitation, and chronic diseases, the Department of Public Health maintains a Bureau of Crippled Children's Services which offers medical care to physically handicapped persons under 21 years of age, provided the parents or legal guardians are unable to meet such costs in whole or in part. During 1963-64, 55,250 children received one or more services from the Bureau for such conditions as congenital malformations, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, and poliomyelitis.[1]

The Bureau of Public Health Social Work devotes special attention to development and support of federal, state, and local programs to reduce poverty and improve the health of the poor. With emphasis on the social aspects of chronic diseases and aging, the Bureau stimulates community interest in nursing home patients.[2]

Private and Voluntary Agencies

Supplementing the state and local government agencies is an astonishing wealth of private and voluntary agencies that, in response to public sympathy for the blind and physically handicapped, perform services of one kind or another for these underprivileged members of our society. These agencies are so numerous as to defy a comprehensive survey as part of this study. The following notes are therefore intended only to be suggestive of the kinds and numbers of agencies whose work is related to proposed library services under Title IV-B.

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[1] See California Department of Public Health, California Health Statistical Report, Part III, Crippled Children Services, Fiscal Years 1962-1963, 1963-1964 (n.d.).

[2] California Department of Public Health, California's Health; Biennial Report 1964-1966 (Vol. XXIV, November-December 1966, issue of California's Health), p. 25.

First, among the agencies that serve the visually handicapped, is the Telephone Pioneers, a group of present or retired telephone company employees who, as noted above, help with the distribution and maintenance of talking book machines. The Braille Institute at Los Angeles, which, in addition to serving as a regional library for books for the blind, performs other services at the national level has also been noted above. Among the other national associations, notable are the American Printing House for the Blind, the American Association of Workers for the Blind, the National Braille Association, the National Federation for the Blind, and the American Foundation for the Blind, which sponsored the St. John survey of library services in 1956.[1]

At the state and local level are numerous agencies, such as the Sacramento Society for the Blind, which coordinates the transcribing activities of the Volunteers of

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[1] Francis R. St. John, op. cit.

Vacaville, stores the materials transcribed, and makes them available for loan. The Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped, State Department of Education, publishes A List of California Transcribers, in cooperation with the California Transcribers and Educators Committee.[1] This list, which identifies 50 volunteer agencies in California, illustrates the wide range of community groups that serve the blind. Typical are the Tape Recording Section of the Berkeley City Club, the Braille Section of the Oakland Women's Athletic Club, the Women of Temple Beth El at Bakersfield, the Braille Section of the American Association of University Women at Long Beach, the Crosstown Study Group at Sherman Oaks, the Pasadena City Schools Transcribing Service, the Lutheran Braille Workers at Whittier, the Transcribing Mariners at Kentfield, and the American Women's Voluntary Services at Sunnyvale. Lists of transcribers employed by public schools in California are included in California Public School Programs for Visually Handicapped Children and Youth.[2]

Another wide range of private and voluntary agencies serve the physically handicapped other than the blind. Supplementing the work of the social welfare and public health agencies are, for example, the Easter seal societies, the National Association for Crippled Children and Adults, the National League for Nursing, and the Paralyzed Veterans of America. Again, the local service clubs and women's organizations play a major role. Hospitals, nursing homes, and private schools for exceptional children make significant contributions. The list of interested health associations includes such typical agencies as the American Physical Therapy Association and the Council for Exceptional Children, each of which has state or local chapters.

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[1] Op. cit.

[2] Coordinating Council on State Programs for the Blind, op. cit.

The complete recitation of all official and private programs to aid the blind and physically handicapped adults and children, as well as other categories of underprivileged citizens, would have little meaning except to emphasize, on the one hand, the very extensive, and frequently unrelated, services to them and, on the other hand, the problem that librarians face in coordinating their programs with those of other agencies.

CHAPTER V

NEEDS AND GOALS

Against this background of data about the blind and physically handicapped and the varieties of programs to help them, I will generalize now about the inadequacies of the library programs, the needs they leave unfilled, and the necessary goals of future programs designed to fill them. The organizational structure of future programs will be discussed in the final chapter.

My thinking about needs and goals rests squarely upon two premises. First, blind and physically handicapped people are entitled to the same quality and range of library services as other people. Handicapped readers should have the opportunity to live as normal and rewarding lives as possible, to be useful members of the family and the community, to hold jobs, to be educated, and to enjoy such arts as are perceivable by them. The library can perform its proper function only if it gives them the same opportunity to read that it gives other people. This means the strengthening and diversification of collections in special media and the provision of reference, bibliographical, readers' guidance, browsing, and other services that are normally available to sighted, ambulatory people.

Second, the library, in order to give the same quality and range of services to the blind and physically handicapped as to other people, must compensate for the handicaps themselves by developing specialized services that are not needed by other people. Here again it must join other agencies, such as schools and nursing homes, in doing for handicapped people what they cannot do for themselves. In addition to providing books in special forms, librarians must go to people who cannot come, talk to people who cannot read, and listen to people who cannot write. Only through special compensatory measures is it possible to give handicapped people the same benefits as are normally enjoyed by non-handicapped people.

Enlargement of Clientele

Libraries strive to reach as many people as possible in the communities they serve, and this goal should now include the blind and physically handicapped as well as sighted, ambulatory people. In Chapter III it was noted that roughly one-fourth of the 34,000 legally blind in California have been borrowing braille or talking books from the California State Library and the Braille Institute. How many more might be reached by more aggressive, compensatory programs could be learned only by experience. It is argued, on the one hand, that the present proportion is already higher than that of sighted readers who use the library and already includes all potential real readers. On the other hand, it is asserted that handicapped people have a much greater, and often unrealized, need for reading than do normal people and the proportion could and would be higher if imaginative, understanding services were taken to them.

When lesser degrees of blindness and other physical handicaps that prevent the use of conventional library materials are included, the potential clientele is enlarged many-fold, possibly to 191,000, which is 5.6 times the number of legally blind in California. The Braille Institute will not, and the State Library has only begun to, serve this greatly expanded clientele. A major need is therefore a deliberate search, in cooperation with such other agencies as may be helpful, for the potential readers in all eligible categories. Libraries can no longer leave this responsibility to other agencies; they must share it with them.

Children and Schools

The two regional libraries for the blind in California, it has been noted, do not reach large numbers of juveniles and are little used by the schools because of the nature of the collections and the short loan period. The public schools have their own separately funded program of service to minors, which is coordinated by the Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped at the State Department of Education. But this program does not cover adults in public schools or any students in private schools or in colleges and universities. The CDVH has the capability of extending service to all these groups but is not legally authorized to do so. While the main burden of service to the schools should continue, I believe, to rest with the State Department of Education, there is a clear need of closer coordination between the State Library and the CDVH for the purpose of aiding the other educational groups. The State Library might, for example, become the vehicle for extending to private schools, and to colleges and universities, the same range of services as the CDVH offers to public schools by utilizing CDVH's central union catalog for the referral of requests to known sources of materials or to volunteer transcribing agencies for the production of other materials, and by building its own collections of textbooks and other necessary resources that are not stocked by the CDVH. The need is to insure that children, in school as well as out, and in private as well as public schools, are reached with services appropriate not only to their general cultural but also to their basic educational needs.

Direct Personal Assistance

A widely recognized weakness of present library services to the blind and physically handicapped is the paucity of personal contact between reader and librarian. The sighted, ambulatory reader achieves this contact by going to the library, where he can ask directly for such help as he wants or needs, before or after searching the catalogs or browsing among the book shelves. The ambulatory blind could also get such help if his local library had the special materials and staff to serve him; but many, perhaps most, of the physically handicapped can not go to the library. The two present regional libraries for the blind are like mail order services for people who can't read the catalogs.

The urgent need of direct personal contact with handicapped readers has several ramifications that call for compensatory activities by the library.

Information about the Reader

As any reference librarian can testify, direct knowledge of the needs of normal readers is important to good service; such knowledge is still more important in serving handicapped readers. The librarian should know not only the reader's recreational interests but also the nature of his disability, his family or institutional situation, his access to help from non-handicapped persons, and, where relevant, his educational needs, his vocational plans, and so on. Indeed, the library ought, I believe, to have on record for each handicapped reader all pertinent information about him, as obtained by interview, and the history of his library use. The need is to compensate, by the systematic recording of data about each reader, for his inability to present and explain himself personally at the library.

Reference and Reading Guidance

The general lack of personal contact with readers obviates the possibility of reference services and critically restricts the kinds and quality of reading guidance that can be given. Both of the regional libraries for the blind supply particular titles requested by readers from the periodic lists that are mailed to them, and both undertake routinely to continue mailing to readers additional titles on the same general topics. While this method appears to work fairly well for recreational reading, where a steady flow of certain types of literature, such as historical novels, is desired, it is inadequate for the purposes of serious reference, systematic study, technical and vocational education, and other proper and normal uses of library resources.[1] The opportunity of handicapped readers to make normal use of library resources is further complicated, as noted above, by their inability to search catalogs and bibliographies for themselves, except as they may be available in braille to those who can read it. Many readers are dependent upon third parties who read and write letters and check the lists for them, but who can not provide the professional guidance that is really needed. For serious reference and guidance purposes at an acceptable professional level, only direct conversation by a librarian with the physically handicapped reader, in person or by telephone, could suffice.

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[1] An educated blind reader whom I interviewed in the course of this study compared the present system with a sorcerer's apprentice, because the only way he could stop the flood of books from coming, once he had requested a particular title for reference use, was to cancel his registration.

Home Service

Personal, professional assistance to non-ambulatory readers would require home visits by librarians, supplemented by telephone calls. It would be desirable, I believe, that such readers who can get to a library be encouraged to do so, if only to add a different and refreshing dimension to the restricted routine of their daily activity, and that facilities for browsing and reference be provided in the library for them. But large numbers of them, including the aged and disabled, will be reachable only in the home, the hospital, or the nursing home. There is no alternative to home service except no service at a significant, professional level.

Circulation Services

The blind reader heretofore has obtained braille and talking books (a) by writing to, or perhaps telephoning, one of the two regional libraries and having specified titles mailed to him or (b) by accepting titles selected by the regional library and mailed to him. He is restricted for the most part to titles owned by, or on deposit at, the library he uses. There are two ways in which direct personal assistance could enhance these lending services.

First is the delivery of books to non-ambulatory readers at their homes or the institutions where they are cared for, after the manner of the experimental service to shut-ins at Los Angeles. How practical such deliveries on a large scale might prove to be I do not know, but they could both speed up the services and provide another point of direct contact with the readers. Second, and more important, is acceptance by local library personnel of responsibility not only for reference and reading guidance services but also for locating needed materials and arranging the loans. The librarian who is in personal contact with a reader is by that fact in the best position to transmit his requests to, or seek the needed materials from, whatever libraries or other agencies may have them or be able to produce them.

A major goal of the cooperative public library systems in California is to make available at any local service point the books or information needed by any reader, no matter in what library the resources may be found. The CDVH already provides location and referral services to the public schools. No such service is yet generally available to other handicapped readers at either the local or state level.

Community Service

Direct knowledge of handicapped readers, adequate reference services and reading guidance, home contacts with shut-ins, and the comprehensive handling of requests for books and information in libraries anywhere in the state or nation are all goals that could be fully met only at the community level. The greatest general weakness of the present system of mail service from two regional libraries in the state is the paucity of communication between librarian and reader. The following letter from an elderly registrant at one of the regional libraries illustrates the reader's predicament:

> I have been away from the world of books for so many years that I do not know the later authors and books. All I could choose are real old. I need help to choose books. . . .

Only at the community level could this reader, and thousands of others like her, be met, and understood, and really helped. Only at home could the all-important personal, human contact be made.

Collections

The braille and talking book collections that are now stocked by the two regional libraries, largely on deposit from the Library of Congress, are splendid resources for general and recreational reading, strong in fiction and classics. The number and kinds of titles that L.C. can supply is now being expanded rapidly with the additional funding under P.L. 89-522. But the regional libraries have in general not undertaken to acquire and lend the vastly wider range of materials in special media--scientific and technical, vocational and professional, foreign language, etc.--that would need to be readily available if physically handicapped readers were in fact to be given services comparable to those enjoyed by sighted readers.

There is a very large and growing repertory of titles transcribed by commercial and voluntary agencies that are not presently obtainable from the regional libraries. Included are textbooks and other specialized materials produced upon request for individual students, vocational rehabilitation centers, and the like, and widely scattered among non-library agencies. These are proper library resources, and their usefulness could be greatly increased if they were collected by libraries and loaned to the general public of physically handicapped people. Highly suggestive of the possibilities is a selected list, compiled for teachers by Fred L. Sinclair of the CDVH, of twenty-two sources, other than the Library of Congress and the regional libraries, for books in special media.[1]

The goal of wide access to the full range of needed resources in special media calls not only for the building of more diverse library collections but also for transcribing

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[1] Fred L. Sinclair, "Some Sources for Teachers of the Visually Handicapped and Secondary Students; Excerpts from 'Student's Resource Guide' . . ." (Sacramento, Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped, June 14, 1967).

and duplicating facilities in libraries. These functions have so far been left almost entirely to non-library agencies, with the result that only a very small segment of the literature of any field is widely and regularly available. But libraries could compensate for this weakness, first, by making tape copies of talking book titles borrowed from other libraries and, second, by organizing their own volunteer groups to produce transcriptions upon request from the conventional collections--transcriptions that could then be borrowed and copied by other libraries.

There is no other agency that could more appropriately and purposefully coordinate the activities of the volunteer transcribers of any community than the library, inasmuch as the materials themselves are, or should be, library resources for the widest possible dissemination. The urgent need is for libraries to mobilize the existing resources in special as well as conventional media, to supplement them with transcriptions produced in response to local demands, and then to insure that those resources are made widely available through normal library procedures to libraries in other communities that have similar demands.

Bibliographical Control

The mobilization of existing resources in special media, including the thousands of transcriptions made by volunteer groups throughout the country, would require, however, a major effort to bring these materials under bibliographical control. The problem of knowing what materials are available where is familiar to librarians, and solutions must be found in the field of special media if handicapped readers are to benefit from them.

The physically handicapped reader, or more accurately the friend, relative, or nurse who reads and writes for him, has only the periodic lists of new material in the regional libraries to choose from, such as Talking Book Topics, Braille Book Review, and News Notes for the Blind. Unlike the sighted reader who goes to the library, he has no complete, retrospective catalog, no periodical indexes, and no subject bibliographies to consult. His knowledge of the resources that might be available to him is appallingly circumscribed on the one hand by the limited scope of the regional library collections and on the other by the selectivity of the current lists that are sent to him.

Local libraries could compensate for the readers' lack of bibliographical information if they had the necessary tools and offered the appropriate, specialized reference services. It appears, however, that few public libraries are presently interested enough to acquire even the periodic list that are mailed to the readers.

The major national union catalog of materials in special media, including those made by volunteers throughout the country, is maintained at the American Printing House

(APH) for the Blind at Louisville, Kentucky. Transcribers are required to report their work to the APH for copyright clearance. It is said that this catalog is now being key-punched for publication in book form and distribution to the regional libraries for the blind and to other libraries. Other general catalogs of braille, talking, and large print books are available from the APH, the Library of Congress, and other agencies, and these may be readily acquired by libraries that want them; but only when the APH union catalog is published can libraries gain direct control over the large numbers of materials produced by voluntary agencies and establish interlibrary lending networks without clearing each request through the APH. Meanwhile, the Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped has, as described above, already made considerable progress toward the creation of such a union catalog in California--a project in which the libraries of California, by and large, do not participate and which serves only the public schools.

Union catalogs of materials in special media for the blind and physically handicapped are perhaps even more crucial than such catalogs for conventional inkprint materials, because of the extraordinary elusiveness of custom-made, single copies of specialized books by volunteer agencies. The creation of such catalogs, moreover, is clearly a responsibility of the library community. If local libraries participated in the collecting and transcribing of books in special media and reported these holdings to the State Library, and if the State Library joined forces with the CDVH, an effective statewide union catalog could be compiled and perhaps published in due course for use by libraries in every community of the state. The systematic reporting of California holdings would also strengthen the national listings of the APH, the Library of Congress, and other agencies. As with conventional inkprint books, the need is to provide access at the point of service to information about existing resources anywhere in the country.

Machine Distribution

A universally expressed need is a system of talking-book machine distribution that would enable all readers to obtain the machines, and repairs for them, from the same source as the talking books. In Chapter IV the anomalies of the present system were noted: the distribution of machines in northern California by the Orientation Center for the Blind instead of the State Library, from which the books are distributed, and in both northern and southern California the distribution of machines by agencies that by charter cannot extend the service to handicapped people other than the blind--people who must now apply directly to the Library of Congress for machines. There is wide agreement that readers would be better served if all their library needs could be satisfied at one place, instead of having to deal with two seemingly unrelated agencies. Libraries have the same kind of responsibility for supplying talking book machines to talking book readers as, for example, for supplying microfilm reading machines to readers of microfilms.

If the State Library's quest of additional appropriations for machine distribution is successful, it will take back this responsibility in northern California from the Orientation Center for the Blind, and for both north and south it will offer machine services to other categories of the physically handicapped. There will remain, however, the same large problem of distance and communication as obtains with the distribution of the books themselves--the same urgent need of direct personal assistance at the community level. Such assistance is now provided, unevenly, only by the Telephone Pioneers. If local libraries assumed responsibility for helping physically handicapped readers to obtain books and information they could also be of great help in ordering and delivering machines, instructing readers in their use, and arranging for the necessary repairs. In large local systems a small number of machines might even be stocked. Again, the goal, whether at the state or local level, is to enable the reader to obtain both the books and the equipment to use them from one source--the library that serves him.

Buildings and Equipment

The general lack of concern among public libraries about blind and physically handicapped readers has resulted, not surprisingly, in a wide-spread failure to design buildings in such a way as to accommodate them. Many school and college libraries have incorporated special facilities for them, but both the San Francisco and the Los Angeles public libraries, for example, are poorly suited to their needs. Attention should be given to such matters as safe, single-level access to the building, to listening, browsing and reference rooms, to braille and large print typewriters, to tape and disc recording and copying studios, and to braille duplicating equipment.[1] The facilities should be designed also for the volunteer groups whose transcribing and other activities should ideally be guided and coordinated by the library.

Public Relations

The two regional libraries for the blind in California have been seen to be essentially passive agencies that respond in limited ways to requests submitted to them. Both depend upon other agencies to identify and send readers to them, and neither is able to send workers into the field. A major need, therefore, is an outgoing, aggressive public relations program to accompany the improved and expanded services contemplated by Title IV-B of the LSCA. Such a program should include publicity disseminated widely to state and local agencies about the library services. Potential readers should be actively sought out at the community level and the library services taken to them. School, college, and university libraries should be fully apprised of specialized materials available to them. Libraries should not only take their proper place among the education, health, and welfare agencies, coordinate programs with them, and seek their help; they must also help them by taking the leadership in developing the book services upon which all of them depend in one degree or another. Instead of leaving to other agencies the outgoing field contacts, the volunteer transcribing, the machine deliveries and repairs, and even the storage and circulation of many types of materials, the libraries should take on these and other such responsibilities as proper components of their own programs.

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[1] See Commission on Standards and Accredition of Services for the Blind, op. cit., pp. 212-14.

Summary of Goals

The goals, then, of library programs under Title IV-B of the LSCA may be summarized as follows, each reflecting an element of need that programs might be designed to satisfy. The broad, basic goal is:

1. To extend, through such compensatory services as may be necessary, the full range and quality of library

service to blind and physically handicapped people.

The following subsidiary goals are means of achieving the basic goal.

2. To identify, seek out, and register the largest possible numbers of blind and physically handicapped people who might benefit from braille and talking books.

3. To develop services, in cooperation with the State Department of Education and the public schools, to students at all levels, especially those in private schools and colleges not served by the Clearinghouse Depository for the Visually Handicapped.

4. To offer direct personal assistance to blind and physically handicapped readers through

    a. The compilation of information about their disabilities and home situations and their recreational, educational, vocational, and other needs.
    b. The provision of reference service and reading guidance based on personal contacts with readers.
    c. Home visits to non-ambulatory readers.
    d. Local circulation services, including the location, interlibrary borrowing, and home delivery of needed materials in special media.
    e. In general, the development of library programs at the community level.

5. To expand and diversify the existing library resources in special media by collecting commercial and

custom-made materials of educational, vocational, scientific, technical, and other significance, by organizing and coordinating the transcribing activities of volunteer groups, and by duplicating custom-made materials for wider dissemination.

6. To bring all available resources in special media under bibliographical control at the local, state, and national levels through the compilation and publication of union catalogs and bibliographies and the development of interlibrary reporting and referral systems.

7. To enable all readers to obtain talking book machines and other special equipment from the same source as they obtain the books.

8. To provide library buildings with safe, single-level access, with browsing, reference, and listening rooms, and with transcribing and duplicating facilities, including those needed by volunteer organizations.

9. To evolve active, outgoing public relations and service programs in cooperation with education, health, welfare, and rehabilitation agencies that serve the same clienteles and to aid those agencies by taking primary responsibility for all book-related programs.

It is recommended that proposals for assistance under Title IV-B be directed toward one or more of these goals. Let us now turn to the general organizational approaches to program development.

CHAPTER VI

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The goals outlined above so far exceed those of existing library programs for the blind and physically handicapped in California as to seem almost unrealistic. They call for a profound reevaluation of library responsibility to handicapped people and the establishment of greatly expanded programs that would cost many times as much as present programs. The basic issue, however, is whether or not library services to handicapped citizens are or are not to be included among other extraordinarily expensive services that our society has already decided are owing to handicapped citizens. Direct personal assistance, for example, including home visits by professional field workers, is already commonplace in the fields of health and social welfare. Our national Congress, in adding Title IV-B to the LSCA, is asking librarians to show that they too can create programs comparable to those of other public agencies and fill a gap that Congress, if not yet the library community, perceives as an important component of the general humane effort. The ability of librarians to meet a major new social responsibility, however costly, is clearly being challenged.

The goals are in fact not unrealistic, however far removed from present realities they may appear to be. The immediate problem is how to move from here to there. What kinds of programs can be undertaken now that will comprise the necessary steps forward, persuasively, toward the ideal programs that might in due course be worthy of all necessary support.

Levels of Responsibility

The conclusion has already been reached that the full range and quality of library services cannot be accomplished at the statewide level by the two existing regional libraries. The obstacles to communication between readers and librarians are insurmountable. The need of direct personal assistance to readers compels some degree of service at the community level. On the other hand, the low density of blind and physically handicapped readers as compared with normal readers (possibly one to each 100 people),[1] combined with a high service cost per reader (up to $30 per year for present services by the State Library), precludes the development of complete, compensatory programs in every community library. Broader population and support bases are indicated, except in major cities. The problem, then, resolves into finding a practicable middle ground between the state and local levels--a compromise that would preserve the economies of statewide operation while reaching as far as possible into every community with effective, local outlets.

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[1] See Chapter III, p. 17.

The COMSTAC report gives attention to national, state, and local levels of responsibility:

> The first level of responsibility rests in the Division for the Blind of the Library of Congress, which implements the word and intent of the Congress, using annual appropriations provided by that body. This national responsibility begins with the selection and distribution of books and related materials for subsequent use by the libraries of the several states. These activities provide a broad base of leadership and coordination.
>
> The second level of responsibility rests in the state governments, acting through their designated agencies responsible for public and school library service, in much the same fashion as Congress acts through the Library of Congress. The libraries for the blind receive their guidance, book collections and related materials as a result of the national activity. Therefore, the state library's most immediate responsibility is to assure the best possible use of the national resources. In addition, the state library agency is expected to supplement these resources with materials obtained through its own sources and with materials of local interest and value.
>
> The third level of responsibility resides in the community within a state, working through its community library agencies: county libraries, library systems, city libraries, school libraries, libraries in rehabilitation centers, university libraries, etc.--in short, any library, public or private, encountering blind or visually handicapped persons among its clientele. These libraries have the state and national programs as backstops to which they turn for information, publications and book resources beyond their immediate holdings.[1]

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[1] Commission on Standards and Accreditation of Services for the Blind, op. cit., p. 199.

While this statement is, perhaps, oriented too strongly toward the collections supplied by the Library of Congress, as contrasted with other, though more elusive, resources available from other agencies, both national and local, it does set the stage for a discussion of the manner in which responsibilities might be allocated at the state and community levels. It introduces the concept that community libraries of all kinds, in carrying out their responsibilities to handicapped readers, should be able to lean upon a continuing statewide program for materials and information beyond their means. A correlative concept is that the statewide agency should delegate as much as possible of the direct library contacts with readers to the community libraries--that is, it should become a library's library and serve readers primarily through local library outlets, upon which it would lean for kinds and qualities of individualized service that are beyond its means.

A system could be conceived in which the major, active resources in special media within the state continued to be held by one or two statewide agencies for mailing upon request to local libraries in the manner of interlibrary loans. The local libraries would in varying degrees, depending upon their means, build their own collections through deposits from the statewide agencies, purchases and gifts, and local transcriptions, but still depend upon the state agencies for the great bulk of materials needed by their clienteles. While such a system could probably be made to work, at least two problems could be anticipated.

First, only the larger metropolitan library systems would have the population and support bases to justify the building of substantial local collections and facilities. The great majority of community libraries would continue to be dependent almost wholly upon mail service from the state agencies. The service would be frustratingly slow and, as well known from studies of interlibrary loans, costly. The benefits of direct personal assistance to readers would be diminished by the remoteness of the books themselves, even the most popular ones, and possibly by inadequate bibliographical information about them. A communications problem would continue to exist--in this case between librarian and librarian, instead of reader and librarian.

Second, in view of the increase in the number of readers and the greater intensity of services contemplated by Title IV-B, and in view of the overall size and population of California, the practicability of continuing to process the great bulk of loans from one or two central agencies should be seriously questioned. The State Library and the Braille Institute are together already mailing an average of 11,000 books per week to readers throughout the state. This number could in the next decade be multiplied several times over. Some degree of decentralization of the more active resources to points closer to the frontlines of service would expedite both communications and deliveries.

These considerations tend toward a system of regional centers where major collections of frequently used resources in special media could be concentrated in proximity to local library outlets in order to improve communications, speed up deliveries, and reduce the work load of the central statewide agencies. The regional base would necessarily be large enough to support the center yet small enough to bring the local outlets, hopefully, within reasonable telephone and messenger distance. The center should satisfy most local needs for books and information, then refer the more esoteric requests to the state agencies.

This pattern is, of course, the classic one by which library systems in general are now developing, though not without problems despite the greater densities of normal readers. For normal purposes, Martin and Bowler have projected a network of nine regional public library systems in California.[1] Several of these regions, notably the East and South Bay and the Greater Los Angeles regions, clearly have, I believe, population bases large enough to support extensive collections for and services to the blind and physically handicapped. Other regions, such as North

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[1] Lowell A. Martin and Roberta Bowler, Public Library Service Equal to the Challenge of California; a Report to the State Librarian (Sacramento, California State Library, June 1965), p. 75.

Mountain, do not. The practicability of a statewide network for library services to the blind and physically handicapped that follows the same pattern as that for services to the rest of the population, including the most sparcely populated regions, may be questioned. Yet, there are other practical considerations, notably the advantage of tying in to communication systems that, even if they could not be justified for the handicapped minority alone, are nevertheless evolving for the non-handicapped majority. Such devices as teletype, messenger services, and automated bibliographical and circulation controls could be exploited for the minority as well as the majority. We have said that the full range and quality of library service should be as readily available to handicapped as to normal readers, and we have argued that services to both are the proper responsibilities of libraries everywhere. We may now argue that cooperative networks of libraries bear the same extended responsibilities. A strong case can be made against the further development of separate library systems at any level for minority groups of readers, on the ground that the high cost of such special services can be most effectively controlled by working through existing, normal library systems and methods, inasmuch as many of the same basic facilities and procedures can be utilized.

I recommend, therefore, that the potentialities of a regional structure be explored in the early experimental grants under Title IV-B and that this structure follow as closely as possible that of the presently evolving cooperative public library systems in the state. It may be noted that this approach could be even more effective if other types of libraries--school, college, and special--were also to be incorporated into these systems as proposed by the new Title III, "Interlibrary Cooperation," of the LSCA. A good strategy would be to begin with pilot programs at one or more regional reference centers with large population bases, limit the services initially to the immediate metropolitan areas, then extend them to community libraries in neighboring counties when sufficient experience had been gained. An example might be San Francisco and the North Bay Cooperative, between which a cooperative program is already being supported with LSCA funds.

Considering the unfamiliar, even revolutionary, nature of the new compensatory services, the problems of efficient deployment of professional staff in the field, the technicalities of transcribing and duplicating services, the mechanics of machine distribution and repair, the establishment of bibliographical control over the available book resources in special media, the organization of volunteer groups, and so on, I believe strongly that the first experiments should not only be restricted geographically to small, heavily populated areas but also continued over a period of four or five years. Meanwhile, as policies and procedures are being worked out on an experimental basis and tested in the community libraries of selected regions, the other regions could continue to be served directly by the statewide agencies, as in the past. The exact nature and extent of collections and services to be developed in the reference centers of regions with very low population densities could probably be determined realistically only after experience had been gained from the more heavily populated regions.

Let us define now in more detail the division of responsibilities that might obtain at the statewide, regional, and community levels, remembering that both "regional" and "community" are terms relative to geographical distances on the one hand and population densities on the other. A "region" might be geographically small in a heavily populated area, and a "community" might be geographically large in a sparsely populated area. We are seeking to define levels of responsibility that might be adapted to varying conditions of distance and density of population.

The divisions of responsibility outlined below are derived partly from the standards set forth in the COMSTAC report.[1] These "standards" are, of course, really long-range goals to which no library in California, to my knowledge, even pretends at this time.

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[1] Commission on Standards and Accreditation of Services for the Blind, op. cit., pp. 205-14.

Community Libraries

Since the goal of providing all readers with the full range and quality of library services can be reached only at the community level, it is imperative that libraries in every community, no matter how small, give appropriate attention to the blind and physically handicapped people who live there, no matter how few. At the minimum:

(1) Some member of the staff should bear specific responsibility for personal contacts with them, for seeking them out and registering them, for reference services and reading guidance, for talking book machine delivery, instruction, and pick up, and for locating and obtaining books in special media for them.

(2) There should be maintained an up-to-date file of information about library resources for and services to the blind and physically handicapped from regional, state, and national agencies, including the Library of Congress catalogs and such periodic lists as Talking-book Topics, Braille Book Review, and News Notes for the Blind.

(3) Handicapped readers should be included as far as possible in such library group activities as story hours, lectures, and discussion groups.

This minimum level of service could be achieved with little financial outlay and no special facilities other than the file of information sources, which are mostly free. Direct personal attention to readers would take staff time, but this is the crucial role of the library at the community level. The books would be obtained elsewhere, but not without professional assistance and guidance to the individual reader.

Larger community libraries could enlarge upon these minimum services in several ways, depending upon their size. They could, for example, begin to put together small reference and browsing collections of books in special media, provide study areas for the blind and physically handicapped, organize and coordinate the local volunteer groups, and buy a tape recorder. They might request rotating deposits of braille and talking books from the regional or State library. But their prime responsibility would still be direct personal assistance to readers, on the assumption that the population and support bases might still be too small to build major collections and bibliographical controls. For these they would lean upon regional and state centers.

Regional Libraries

The regional centers would build major collections of frequently used materials and a full complement of services in support of the community libraries which, for the most part, would handle local contacts beyond the immediate reach of the regional centers. Specifically the regional centers would:

(1) Build collections of books in special media sufficient to meet the most frequent demands of the region through (a) deposits from the Library of Congress, (b) acquisitions by gift (especially custom-made transcriptions) and purchase, and (c) library-sponsored transcriptions by volunteer groups in the region. Reference and browsing collections to be included. Infrequently used books to be deposited at the State Library for easier access from all regions of the state. Collections to include technical, scientific, professional, vocational, and other resources in addition to recreational and cultural.

(2) Compile a union catalog of materials in special media in all libraries in the region, including custom-transcriptions by volunteer groups, and report all holdings to the State Library for inclusion in its statewide union catalogs.

(3) Maintain a register, with appropriate personal, vocational, and other data, including reading interests, of all blind and physically handicapped readers in the region.

(4) Provide professional field consultant services to the community libraries of the region in regard to

program development, and provide direct personal assistance to readers in the center's own community.

(5) Offer reference, reading guidance, and lending services, including referral of requests to the State Library, to community libraries on behalf of their readers and directly to readers in the center's own community.

(6) Supply rotating deposit collections to community libraries and/or bookmobile visits to institutions and homes where shut-ins are resident.

(7) Keep a stock of talking book machines for prompt delivery to readers in the region. Insure that new readers are instructed in their use, that broken machines are picked up and forwarded to the State Library for repair, that substitute machines are supplied, etc.

(8) Establish reference, browsing, and study rooms, recording and duplicating studios, and safe, single level means of access to regional library facilities.

(9) Maintain a register of volunteer transcribers and readers in the region, coordinate their activities, provide studios for them, and insure that acceptable standards of transcribing are observed.

(10) Develop an efficient communications system (or utilize an existing one), including telephone, teletype,

and messenger services, as may be indicated, within the region.

(11) Supplement community library efforts to search out and identify potential readers and certify their eligibility.

(12) Publicize the programs.

The State Library

The State Library would continue mail services directly to individuals and/or community libraries in regions that lack regional centers, as described above; but where such centers do exist it would backstop them by assuming the following responsibilities:

(1) Build the major statewide collection of materials in special media, including infrequently used materials not stocked by, or discarded from, the regional and community libraries.

(2) Deposit Library of Congress materials in the regional centers.

(3) Maintain a statewide union catalog of materials in special media and provide interlibrary loan referral services. Report California holdings to the Library of Congress.[1]

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[1] It is assumed that materials in special media would be covered by the projected mechanized processing center at the State Library and that book-form catalogs might in due course be produced for statewide distribution and use.

(4) Provide lending and reference services to the regional and community libraries.

(5) Operate a central duplicating service for braille, disc, and tape media.

(6) Keep the central stock of talking book machines for allocation to the regional libraries and provide a central repair service.

(7) Offer overall guidance to library services to the blind and physically handicapped in California, through planning, coordination, and consulting activities in the field and through close working relationships with education, health, and welfare agencies that serve the same clienteles.

In general, the frontline personal contacts with and assistance to readers, the coordination of local transcribing activities, the acquisition of custom-made recordings, and so on would be left primarily to the regional and community libraries.

The Braille Institute

The future role of the Braille Institute as a second "regional" (in the national perspective) library for the blind in California is complicated by the fact that, unlike the State Library, it cannot respond to Title IV-B by extending its services to the physically handicapped other than the blind. The resulting service gap in southern California must therefore be filled by the State Library.

In the evolution of a statewide system that involves community and regional libraries, as outlined above, it is believed that the State Library should now become the principal coordinating center for the entire state, inasmuch as it has the legal status and the statewide responsibility, and it administers both state and federal aid to libraries, including Title IV-B. These are obligations that cannot be delegated. The splendid, efficient services of the Braille Institute, however, should not now be shunted aside; instead, a new relationship with the State Library on the one hand and with community and regional libraries on the other should be worked out. The library of the Braille Institute might, for example, be redefined as a branch of the State Library (setting aside, perhaps, the former regional boundary) for specialized services that are consonant with the teaching and other programs of the Institute. It might become an ideal vehicle for experimental, developmental, and research programs of statewide significance. Or possibly it could continue to perform primarily a regional function. But the overall responsibility for the statewide system must necessarily, I believe, devolve upon the State Library.

First Steps

In conclusion, I recommend the following first steps toward the long-term development of a statewide system of library service to the blind and physically handicapped, as new funds become available through Title IV-B of the LSCA. First is the strengthening of the Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped program of the California State Library, and second is its promotion of pilot programs at the regional and community levels.

It is clear that the State Library, if it is really to guide, coordinate, and backstop a statewide system of library service to the blind and physically handicapped, must greatly extend the scope of its own present activities in several specific directions. Notably, it must begin the extensive collecting of materials in special media other than those supplied by the Library of Congress, the compilation (in collaboration with the Clearinghouse-Depository for the Visually Handicapped) of a union catalog of materials in special media that are available throughout the state, and the offering of interlibrary loan referral services. In keeping with present plans, it must also take back the responsibility for the distribution and repair of talking book machines and it must establish a duplicating laboratory. It is appropriate, I believe, that a major part of the funds that become initially available through Title IV-B be added to the additional funds already being sought from the State in order to provide a more solid base upon which a statewide structure could be erected. Finally, there should be added to the State Library staff at least one full time field consultant on the blind and physically handicapped to help plan, stimulate, and advise on the creation of regional and community programs. Implied by these first steps is, of course, a substantial increase in staff, both professional and clerical, and in supplies, equipment, and space.

Another major part of Title IV-B funds should be allocated to one or more intensive, fairly long term (4 or 5 year) pilot programs at the regional and community levels. As suggested above, the initial projects should probably occur in regional centers with heavy population densities in rather small geographical areas, to be extended then to the surrounding community libraries. The goal would be to create first a model regional center upon which the smaller communities could then lean. If possible, the demonstrations should occur within established cooperative library systems in order to exploit existing administrative structures and communications networks.

The proposed responsibilities of regional and community libraries have been outlined above. For project purposes, however, I recommend that certain data gathering, reporting, and evaluative procedures be added, because of the paucity of existing information about and experience with this radically new dimension of the library program. Specifically, the projects should be designed to collect reliable local data on the numbers, disabilities, and locations of eligible readers, the types of collections and services needed, the detailed costs of various services, the existence and accessibility of custom-made materials, the desirable technical specifications of talking-book machines and recording equipment, and so on. The projects themselves should be caused to generate the statistical and financial data upon which future, statewide planning could be based.

Because of the present lack of precise information about the local distributions of blind and physically handicapped people and the costs of various proposed services, I recommend further that the initial pilot projects be funded not on a per capita basis but on the basis of the actual costs of proposed staff, equipment, and services. Future grants to regional cooperative library systems might prove to be practical on the basis of either the known distribution of handicapped readers or, if that distribution follows closely that of normal readers, a standard percentage of expenditures for service to normal readers. Either method would assume the wide acceptance of administrative and service patterns that still have to be learned from the experience of the pilot projects.